

Maryland Historical Trust

Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties number: BA-2735 ✓  
 Name: BECKLEYSVILLE RD. OVER PRETTYBOY RESERVOIR

The bridge referenced herein was inventoried by the Maryland State Highway Administration as part of the Historic Bridge Inventory, and SHA provided the Trust with eligibility determinations in February 2001. The Trust accepted the Historic Bridge Inventory on April 3, 2001. The bridge received the following determination of eligibility.

MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST	
Eligibility Recommended <u>X</u>	Eligibility Not Recommended _____
Criteria: <u>  </u> A <u>  </u> B <u>  </u> C <u>  </u> D Considerations: <u>  </u> A <u>  </u> B <u>  </u> C <u>  </u> D <u>  </u> E <u>  </u> F <u>  </u> G <u>  </u> None	
Comments: _____	
Reviewer, OPS: <u>Anne E. Bruder</u> Date: <u>  </u> 3 April 2001 <u>  </u>	
Reviewer, NR Program: <u>Peter E. Kurtze</u> Date: <u>  </u> 3 April 2001 <u>  </u>	

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MARYLAND INVENTORY OF HISTORIC BRIDGES  
HISTORIC BRIDGE INVENTORY  
MARYLAND STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION/  
MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

MHT No. BA-2735

SHA Bridge No. BC 6516

Bridge name Beckleysville Road over Prettyboy Reservoir

**LOCATION:**

Street/Road name and number [facility carried] Beckleysville Road

City/town Beckleysville

Vicinity           

County Baltimore

This bridge projects over: Road            Railway            Water X Land           

Ownership: State            County            Municipal X Other           

**HISTORIC STATUS:**

Is the bridge located within a designated historic district? Yes            No             
National Register-listed district            National Register-determined-eligible district             
Locally-designated district            Other           

Name of district           

**BRIDGE TYPE:**

Timber Bridge           :  
Beam Bridge            Truss -Covered            Trestle            Timber-And-Concrete           

Stone Arch Bridge           

Metal Truss Bridge X

Movable Bridge           :  
Swing            Bascule Single Leaf            Bascule Multiple Leaf             
Vertical Lift            Retractable            Pontoon           

Metal Girder           :  
Rolled Girder            Rolled Girder Concrete Encased             
Plate Girder            Plate Girder Concrete Encased           

Metal Suspension           

Metal Arch           

Metal Cantilever           

Concrete           :  
Concrete Arch            Concrete Slab            Concrete Beam            Rigid Frame             
Other            Type Name

**DESCRIPTION:**

Setting: Urban \_\_\_\_\_ Small town \_\_\_\_\_ Rural X

**Describe Setting:**

Bridge BC-6516 carries Beckleysville Road over Prettyboy Reservoir approximately 1/4 mile east of the crossroads of Beckleysville. Beckleysville Road runs generally in a east/west direction in the area while Gunpowder Falls flows to the southeast. The Prettyboy Dam and Reservoir are located in northern Baltimore County, just outside Gunpowder Falls State Park. As it is a watershed, the area is relatively pristine and is surrounded by rolling hills and forests. The area is undeveloped with no buildings around the bridge.

**Describe Superstructure and Substructure:**

Bridge BC-6516 is a two lane, five span bridge, consisting of 4 plate girder spans and a Pratt through truss. The truss span has 12 panels, and features inclined endposts. The top chord is a built-up section of 2 channels with cover plates on top, battens and lattice bars on the bottom. The bottom chord is a built-up section of paired angles with solid plates connected with stay plates. The floor system has I-beam stringers and floorbeams. All verticals are built-up sections of channels with lacing bars and stay plates; the 11 vertical is a rolled section. Diagonals are rolled sections. All connections are rivetted. There is no sidewalk on the bridge and the truss members are protected by a concrete Jersey barrier. The abutments are concrete with U-shaped wingwalls; piers are concrete. There are no plaques on the bridge; 1931-87 is impressed in the concrete parapet.

**Discuss Major Alterations:**

Baltimore City inspection files do not indicate that major alterations have occurred. A concrete Jersey barrier was installed on the deck in 1987; the date of the installation is set into the parapet .

**HISTORY:**

WHEN was the bridge built 1931

This date is: Actual \_\_\_\_\_ Estimated \_\_\_\_\_

Source of date: Plaque X Design plans \_\_\_\_\_ County bridge files/inspection form \_\_\_\_\_

Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**WHY was the bridge built?**

The bridge was built as part of the construction of the Prettyboy Reservoir complex. This expansion of Baltimore's water supply system was north of the existing two dams on Gunpowder Falls at Loch Raven. The expansion was required to increase the water supply available to the city of Baltimore. (See significant events, below). Bridge BC-6516 was built to carry Beckleysville Road over the reservoir which resulted from building the dam. Historic maps show that Beckleysville Road crossed the Gunpowder Falls (at that time a narrow stream) at about the same location prior to the dam's flooding of the area.

**WHO was the designer?**

The bridge designer is unknown.

Chief water engineers for Prettyboy Dam included Charles F. Goob Edward G. Rost, and Leon Small. Bernard L. Crozier and C.B. Cornell were the construction engineers; James W. Armstrong was the filtration engineer; Frank O. Heyder was the architect, and John H. Gregory was the consulting engineer.

**WHO was the builder?**

Unknown.

**WHY was the bridge altered?**

The concrete barrier was added to protect the metal trusses.

**Was this bridge built as part of an organized bridge-building campaign?**

Bridge BC 6516 was built as part of the Prettyboy reservoir project, a City of Baltimore water supply expansion project.

**SURVEYOR/HISTORIAN ANALYSIS:**

**This bridge may have National Register significance for its association with:**

A - Events   X        B- Person             
C- Engineering/architectural character           

**Was the bridge constructed in response to significant events in Maryland or local history?**

Prettyboy Reservoir is part of the water supply system of the City of Baltimore. Up until the middle of the nineteenth century water was furnished to the city by the Baltimore City Water Company which brought the water from the Jones Falls.

The concern for a good, clean water supply in Baltimore began over a century before the construction of the Prettyboy Reservoir. By 1848, it was noted that "Baltimore is most inadequately supplied with water," and that "the time had arrived for a movement to be made towards diverting the water of Gwynn's Falls, the Gunpowder, or some other falling streams of the vicinity, for this purpose". Construction began on the first water-works in 1858, when a dam was erected across Jones Falls, eight miles outside the city. By ca. 1881, Lake Roland, Hampden Reservoir, Druid Lake, High Service Reservoir, and Mount Royal Reservoir had been constructed to tap into Jones Falls; and three reservoirs were constructed on the Gunpowder River, including Loch Raven, Montebello Lake, and Clifton Lake. It was claimed that "[t]he completion of the Gunpowder Permanent Water-supply gives Baltimore a system of water-works unequaled in the United States, affording a supply of water nearly double that of the great city of New York..."

The water supplied by Loch Raven and Jones Falls was adequate for Baltimore until the first decade of the twentieth century. A new Loch Raven dam was started in 1912, however the city had difficulty acquiring land needed in order to raise the elevation of the new dam to the desired 240 feet, and it was not completed until 1922. By 1924, when demand exceeded the safe recommended

usage of 100,000,000 gallons per day, advisors to the city recommended expanding the water supply system again to the north on Gunpowder Falls.

Constructed by the city of Baltimore during a three-year period from 1930-1933, Prettyboy was the northernmost reservoir in the county and city's system. Funds to construct the Prettyboy Dam and Reservoir were raised over a nine-year period from loans approved by Baltimore residents. A "Public Improvement Commission" was created in 1920, and they began raising funds in 1924. The dam called for 192,000 cubic yards of concrete, and the cost of constructing the dam was \$2,383,732. However, this sum did not include the building of roads, other bridges and culverts, the purchase and clearing of land for the reservoir, and numerous engineering expenses. The total cost for the entire project was \$4,110,135.

The Prettyboy Dam complex consists of three principal components: a concrete gravity dam, a gatehouse, and a closed-spandrel, concrete arch bridge. To the north of the dam complex is the Prettyboy water reservoir, with an elevation of 520 feet. Compared with the city system's other reservoirs, Prettyboy's crest of 520 feet was the highest; Loch Raven's was 240 feet and Liberty Reservoir's (constructed in the 1940s) was 341 feet.

Bridge BC-6516 is within the reservoir complex, north of the dam, and carries Beckleysville Road over the Reservoir. Historic maps of the area indicate that Beckleysville Road was upgraded to the east of the crossing as part of this building campaign.

**When the bridge was built and/or given a major alteration, did it have a significant impact on the growth and development of the area?**

The bridge and the newly extended Beckleysville Road facilitated access to the area east of the Gunpowder Falls. Prettyboy Reservoir is both a municipal water supply and a recreational area, providing areas for fishing, boating, hiking and picnicking. This bridge has facilitated access to the reservoir area and promoted growth of the area as a whole.

**Is the bridge located in an area which may be eligible for historic designation and would the bridge add to or detract from the historic/visual character of the potential district?**

The Prettyboy Loch Raven Reservoir area may be eligible for historic designation, and the bridge would add to both the historic and visual character of the potential district.

**Is the bridge a significant example of its type?**

This bridge was one of a small but significant number of metal truss bridges erected in Maryland from the 1920s through the 1940s. Its heavy, solidly configured members, wide deck, and higher vertical clearance reflects continuing advances in metal truss construction in response to heavier and taller (trucks) loads. Thus configured, the metal truss bridge continued to be designed for major crossings. Such bridges were built throughout the state during the period, particularly in the 1930s.

**Does the bridge retain integrity of important elements described in Context Addendum?**

Bridge BC-6516 retains integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling and association. It possesses integrity of its major components.

**Is the bridge a significant example of the work of a manufacturer, designer, and/or engineer?**

Unknown.

**Should the bridge be given further study before an evaluation of its significance is made?**

No further study is necessary in order to evaluate the significance of this bridge.

**BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

**County inspection/bridge files** \_ **SHA inspection/bridge files**

**Other (list):** Baltimore City inspection/bridge files

County survey files of the Maryland Historical Trust

Baltimore County Historical Society files

Baltimore County Library vertical files

P.A.C. Spero & Company and Louis Berger & Associates, *Historic Highway Bridges in Maryland: Historic Context Report*. Prepared for the Maryland State Highway Administration.

**SURVEYOR:**

**Date bridge recorded** January 1996

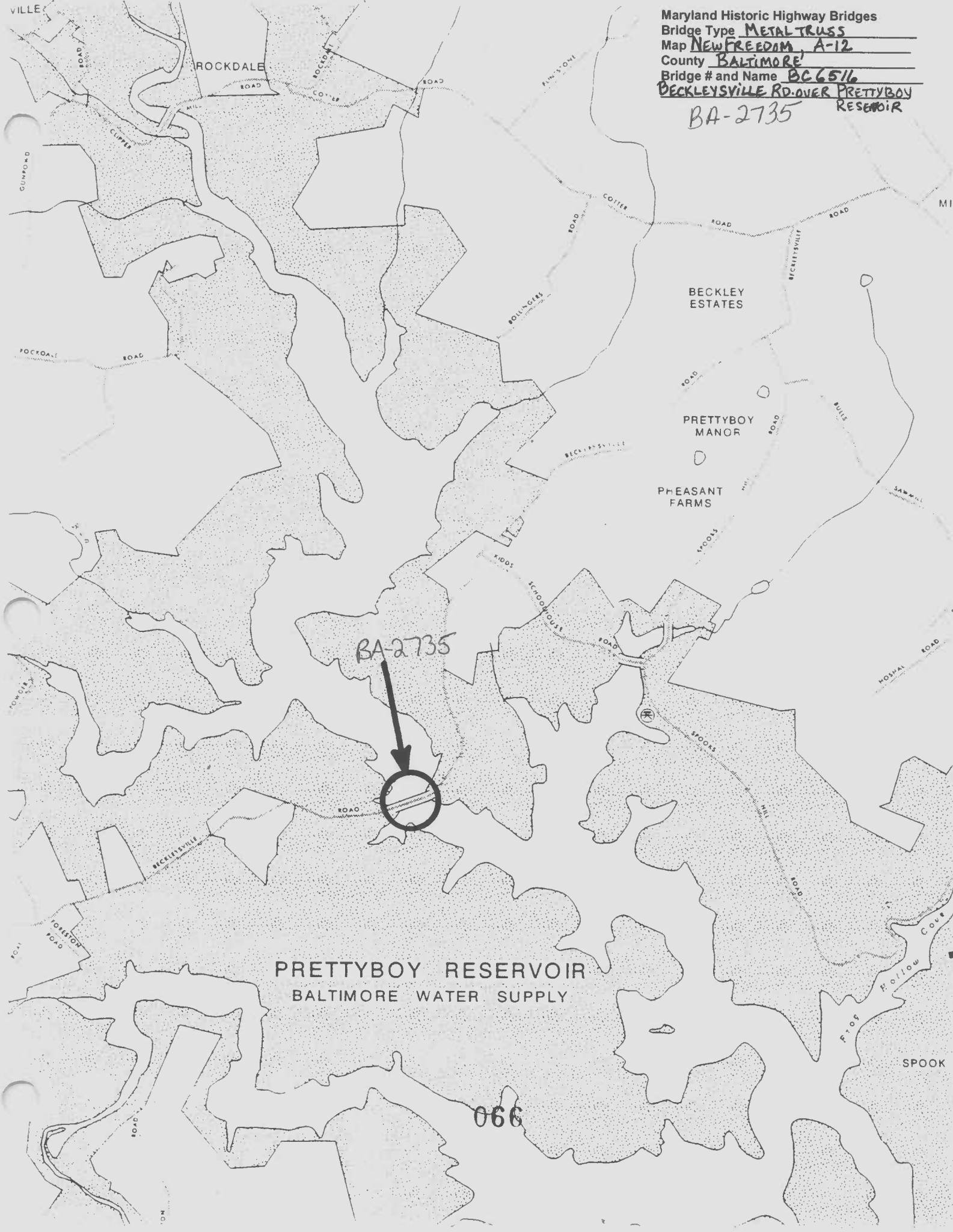
**Name of surveyor** Paula Spero/Colin Farr

**Organization/Address** P.A.C. Spero & Co., 40 W. Chesapeake Avenue, Suite 412, Baltimore, Maryland 21204

**Phone number** 410-296-1635

**FAX number** 410-296-1670

Maryland Historic Highway Bridges  
Bridge Type METAL TRUSS  
Map NEW FREEDOM, A-12  
County BALTIMORE  
Bridge # and Name BC6516  
BECKLEYVILLE RD. OVER PRETTYBOY  
RESERVOIR  
BA-2735



PRETTYBOY RESERVOIR  
BALTIMORE WATER SUPPLY

066





BC 6516 STH Approach

15

1) BA-2735

2) Beckleysville Road over Pretty Bay Reservoir

3) --- Baltimore City

4) C. Fair

5) Feb. 1996

6) P.A.C. Spore Co 40 W Chesapeake Ave #412, 21204

7) Beckleysville Rd over Pretty Bay - South approach

8) 1 of 8



BC 6516

East Elevation

4

1 BA-2735

2 Beckleysville Road over Pretty Bay Reservoir

3 Baltimore City

4 Colin Farr

5 February 1996

6 PRC Spew and Company, Towson MD 21204

7 Beckleysville Rd. over Pretty Bay Reservoir,  
east elevation

8 7 of 8



BC 6516

East Elevation

7

1 BA-2735

2 Beckleyville Rd. over Pretty Boy Reservoir

3 Baltimore City

4 Colin Farr

5 February 1996

6 PAC Spew and Company, Towson MD 21204

7 Beckleyville Road over Pretty Boy Reservoir,  
east elevation

8 3 of 8



BC CSIC 5TH PORTAL

1

1 BA-2735

2 Beckleysville Road over Pretty Boy Reservoir

3 Baltimore City

4 Colin Farr

5 February 1996

6 PAC Spew and Company, Towson MD 21204

7 Beckleysville Rd. over Pretty Boy Reservoir,  
South portal

84 & 8





BC 6516

North

Portal

3

1 BA-2735

2 Beckleysville Rd. over Pretty Boy Reservoir

3 Baltimore City

4 Colin Farr

5 February 1996

6 PAC Spew and Company, Towson MD 21204

7 Beckleysville Rd over Pretty Boy Reservoir,  
north portal

8 5 of 8



BC 45K

Truss numbers

8

1 BA-2735

2 Beckleysville Rd. over Pretty Boy Reservoir

3 Baltimore City

4 Colin Farr

5 February 1996

6 PFA Spencer and Company, Towson MD 21204

7 Beckleysville Rd. over Pretty Boy Reservoir

8 6 of 8



Becksville

upper joint

10

1 BA-2735

2 Beckleyville Road over Pretty Boy Reservoir

3 Baltimore City

+ Colin Farr

5 February 1996

6 PAC Spec and Company, Towson MD 21204

7 Beckleyville Rd over Pretty Boy Reservoir,

upper joint

8 7 of 8

1931-87

BC 6516

Date on concrete parapet O

1 BA-2735

2 Becklupsille Rd. over Pretty Boy Reservoir

3 Baltimore City

4 Colin Farr

5 February 1996

6 PAC Spec and Company, Towson MD 21204

7 Becklupsille Rd. over Pretty Boy Reservoir,  
date on concrete

8 8 of 8

parapet